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uniformly along the surface of the LCD 50. See Malhi, column 4, lines 24-26. And, like the admitted prior art, the backing case 22 is used as a housing to protect internal display components. See Malhi, column 3, lines 19-25. Thus, like the admitted prior art, the light guide 80 and the backing case 22 of Malhi are separate structural components performing separate functions -- i.e., conducting light and protecting internal components, respectively.

In contrast, Applicant's Claim 1 defines "an LCD housing comprising a single, light conducting material" and includes "a LCD coupled directly to the LCD housing . . . wherein the LCD housing functions as a light pipe for conducting light from the light source directly to the LCD, and protects the LCD." See Claim 1. Similar limitations are presented in Claims 16 and 17.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has suggested that the LCD housing comprises both elements 22 and 80 as illustrated in Figure 4 of Malhi. Accordingly, based on that assumption, the Examiner has rejected the claims by combining the separate components of the light guide 80 and case 22, along with their functions, as though they were a single member of the Malhi device. In support of this position, in an Office Action dated March 22, 2000, the Examiner stated that "the case (22) supporting the light guide (80) is made by the same material as that of the light guide (column 3, lines 19-21 and column 4, lines 19-20). In addition, while Malhi states that the case (22) is used to support the light guide (80) and the LCD (50), Malhi has never taught that there is any element(s) disposed between the light guide (80) and the case (22)." Thus, the Examiner concluded that "it is clearly that the case (22) has a function of providing light to the LCD (50) at the same time with the light guide (80) while still providing a function of protection to the LCD (50) as claimed."

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of the Malhi reference as it relates to the claims as presented. For example, the reference at column 3, lines 19-21, states that the display unit 20 "comprises a case 22 which in the preferred embodiment is made of a tough acrylic or polyurethane material capable of withstanding cracking or fading." At column 4, lines 19-20, the Malhi reference states that "light guide 80 is made of an acrylic polyurethane material . . . and has a flat surface area that is coated with a white sheet of light reflective material." (emphasis added). Applicant submits that the mere fact that the case 22 and light guide 80 may be constructed of polyurethane material does not teach that they are the same material. In fact, the lining in the drawing of Figure 4 suggests that the case 22 is of a different

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material than that of the light guide 80. This should not be surprising, since these two elements are disclosed as accomplishing different functions in the Malhi reference. Furthermore, as was noted above, the Malhi reference teaches that the light guide 80 “is a flat surface area that is coated with a white sheet of light reflective material.” (Column 4, lines 21-22). Malhi also teaches that “[t]he reflective material of the light guide 80 captures the admitted light and distributes it evenly across its surface.” (Column 4, lines 32-35). It appears that this coating of light reflective material is located on the surface of the light guide 80 which is adjacent to the case 22. Thus, if light were traveling through the case 22, it would be prevented from entering the light guide 80 along that interface which includes the reflective coating.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that Malhi not only does not teach or suggest the invention as defined by Applicant’s claims, but that it teaches away from Applicant’s claimed invention by disclosing two separate elements, which perform separate functions, and which have an intervening layer of reflective material that would prevent light which may be in the cover 22 from being communicated through that layer and through the separate light guide 80 to the LCD 50. This is contrary to Applicant’s display, which includes “a LCD housing comprising a single, light conducting material . . . wherein the LCD housing functions as a light pipe for conducting light from the light source directly to the LCD and protects the LCD.” See, e.g., Claim 1 (emphasis added).

Further to the above, Applicant notes that even if the light guide 80 and case 22 of Malhi were constructed of the same material, and even if there were no intervening layer of light reflective material between those two components, there would still exist an interface between the two components which would interfere with the flow of light from the case 22 to the LCD 50. No such interference occurs in Applicant’s computer display, which includes a LCD housing comprising a single, light conducting material. See, e.g., Claims 1, 16 and 17.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that there is neither any teaching in, nor would it have been made obvious by, the Malhi reference to provide a computer display including a LCD housing comprising a single, light conducting material, which conducts lights from the light source directly to the LCD and protects or houses the LCD. See, e.g., Claims 1 and 16). Nor does that reference teach or make obvious a method as defined in Claim 17, which includes “conducting the generated light through the LCD housing directly to the LCD, wherein the LCD housing comprises a single, light conducting material and functions as a light pipe for

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illuminating the LCD and protects the LCD.” Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 16 and 17 define subject matter which is patentable over the prior art of record. Furthermore, since Claims 2, 3, 14, 15 and 17 each depend from one of the above-indicated independent claims, Applicant submits that these claims also define subject matter which is patentable over the art of record.

In the Office Action dated August 14, 2000, the Examiner also rejected Claims 4-13 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Malhi (U.S. Patent No. 5,844,773). Since each of these claims depend from one of independent Claims 1 or 17, it is submitted that for the reasons presented above, these claims also define subject matter which is patentable over the art of record. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-19 are now in condition for immediate allowance and such prompt allowance of the same is respectfully requested.

New Claim 20 has been added herein in order to assist in fully defining the subject matter which comprises Applicant’s invention.

Conclusion

The Applicant has endeavored to address all of the Examiner’s concerns as expressed in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, amendments to the claims for patentability purposes pursuant to statutory sections 102, 103 and/or 112, the reasons therefore, and arguments in support of the patentability of the pending claim set are presented above.

Any claim amendments which are not specifically discussed in the above remarks are not made for patentability purposes, and it is believed that the claims would satisfy the statutory requirements for patentability without the entry of such amendments. Rather, these amendments have only been made to increase claim readability, to improve grammar, and to reduce the time and effort required of those in the art to clearly understand the scope of the claim language. Any new claims presented above are of course intended to avoid the prior art, but are not intended as replacements or substitutes for any cancelled claims. They are simply additional specific statements of inventive concepts described in the application as originally filed.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections is specifically requested. If the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of these claims that could be clarified with a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned.

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Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated:

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By:

Drew S. Hamilton

Drew S. Hamilton
Registration No. 29,801
Attorney of Record
620 Newport Center Drive
Sixteenth Floor
Newport Beach, CA 92660
(619) 235-8550

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